

## REMARKS

Claims 23-31 are pending in the present application. None of the claims were amended in this response. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 23-28, 30-36 and 38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Alperovich (US Patent 6,101,393). Claims 29 and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Alperovich (US Patent 6,101,393), in view of Rooke (US Pub. 2002/0044634). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Specifically, the prior art, alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest features wherein “the recipient receives the message anonymously and notifies the service provider if the recipient wants to have the sender of the message put on a list of exclusions, the notification to the service provider containing a message identifier as an identification signal from which the service provider can determine an identity of the sender, with the message identifier being a reference to a storage location of one of a message URI and a message identification element Message-ID; and the recipient receives the message with an alias name and notifies the service provider if the recipient wants to have the sender of the message put on the list of exclusions, with the notification to the service provider containing the alias name as an identification signal” as recited in claim 23, and similarly recited in claim 31.

The present claims solve the problem of message screening (selective delivery of messages) in cases where the sender wants to hide his identity before the receiver. The claimed features describe the use of an alias name that replaces the sender's address or the hiding of the sender's address (i.e not displaying it to the receiver). Neither of these features are taught or suggested in Alperovich. Instead, the reference discloses a screening mechanism for selectively accepting and rejecting Short Message Service (SMS) messages. Located within the Public Land Mobile Network's (PLMN) Home Location Register (HLR), the screening mechanism determines the Mobile Station-Integrated Services Digital Network (MSISDN) number (or other origin identifier) of an entity attempting to locate a particular mobile subscriber for the purpose of sending an SMS transmission (col. 1, line 60 - col. 2, line 2). The screening application compares the identifier to one of two lists stored in the HLR. The first of the two lists contains all MSISDN numbers from which SMS messages are to be accepted, and the second list contains

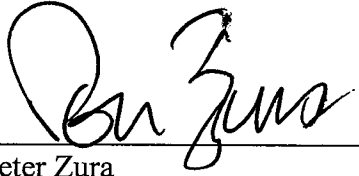
all MSISDN numbers from which SMS messages may not be accepted. The screening mechanism is activated when the HLR is interrogated by the SMS Gateway Mobile Services Switching Center (SMS-GMSC) for the location of the intended SMS-message recipient. If the screening mechanism determines that the incoming SMS message is to be accepted, or alternately not rejected, then routing information is transmitted and the SMS message is delivered or remains buffered (col. 2, lines 3-23; col. 5, lines 22-50; FIG. 5)

The Office Action alleges that using an alias would have been obvious in view of the fact that Alperovich suggest to use alternative names other than MSISDN or IMSI (col. 6, lines 15-20). Accordingly, the term "alias name" is being interpreted by the Examiner as being equivalent to the "origin identifier" disclosed in Alperovich. The MSISDN in Alperovich is regarded as the most important practical example for an origin identifier, along with the use of the IMSI. However, these elements do not address the problem to be solved in the claims (anonymous/alias transmission), because the MSISDN is routinely suppressed (i.e. will not be transmitted) by a sender aiming to preserve his anonymity before the receiver. Also, the IMSI will never be available to a receiver, because it merely serves for purposes of the service provider to identify individual mobile phones. Thus, the "origin identifiers" relied upon in the Office Action are not suitable as substitutes for the alias name in the present claims. The inventive solution to use an alias name can therefore not be regarded as being obvious in view of Alperovich.

In light of the above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections are traversed and that claims 23-31 are both novel and non-obvious over the art of record. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If any additional fees are due in connection with this application as a whole, the Commissioner is authorized to deduct said fees from Deposit Account No.: 02-1818. If such a deduction is made, please indicate the attorney docket number (0112740-933) on the account statement.

Respectfully submitted,

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